

FEDERAL AID IN CONSTRUCTION OF POST ROADS.

JANUARY 29, 1921.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. SELLS, from the Committee on Roads, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 15873.]

By direction of the Committee on Roads there is submitted herewith H. R. 15873, a bill to authorize the appropriation of additional sums for Federal aid in the construction of post roads, and for other purposes, with the unanimous recommendation of same that the bill do pass.

It is not necessary to submit herewith an argument in support of Federal aid to the States in road building. That principle was thoroughly discussed and affirmatively decided in 1916, when the Congress made the first appropriation for this purpose. Since that time a subsequent Congress has reaffirmed it, and a total of \$266,750,000 has been appropriated for the continuance of the work. The results have more than justified the expectations of the original supporters of the plan. The record shows that it has proved a great stimulus to road construction, and that notwithstanding the extraordinary circumstances more money has been expended for road construction than during any similar period of our country's history. Likewise more miles of roads have been built than in any other period.

At the expiration of the present fiscal year the Federal Government will have, since 1916, expended or approved projects calling for the ultimate expenditure of the above sum at a rate of a little more than \$50,000,000 per year. And yet so great has been the stimulus that in 1919 alone the States added to this amount approximately \$400,000,000. The figures for 1920 are not yet available, but it is certain that they will greatly exceed this sum, and will probably reach a total of more than \$500,000,000. The best authorities estimate that the stimulus of national aid has more than doubled State expenditures for road construction. More than 20,000 miles of roads have either been completed or are under contract on which construction is now going forward.

There is also submitted herewith a report from the Bureau of Public Roads which affords full information concerning the distribution and expenditure of Federal money by the various States.

Status Federal-aid road funds, Dec. 31, 1920.

State.	Allotment.	Amount under construction and completed.	Per cent of contracts completed.	Funds available for new contracts.
Alabama.....	\$5,776,552.58	\$1,629,970.00	59	\$4,146,582.58
Arizona.....	3,771,351.69	2,240,459.00	68	1,530,892.69
Arkansas.....	4,619,929.47	2,467,619.00	44	2,152,310.47
California.....	8,384,354.57	3,447,320.00	50	4,937,034.57
Colorado.....	4,780,064.14	1,814,174.00	58	2,965,890.14
Connecticut.....	1,689,324.70	824,423.00	27	864,901.70
Delaware.....	447,654.83	284,980.00	68	162,674.83
Florida.....	3,150,112.48	2,234,194.00	16	915,918.48
Georgia.....	7,407,578.62	5,876,291.00	51	1,531,287.62
Idaho.....	3,360,388.86	2,969,138.00	51	391,250.86
Illinois.....	12,024,266.97	10,887,938.00	55	1,136,328.97
Indiana.....	7,415,292.61	2,699,368.00	41	4,715,924.61
Iowa.....	7,939,343.14	5,799,334.00	35	2,140,009.14
Kansas.....	7,895,309.07	4,292,698.00	39	3,602,611.07
Kentucky.....	5,370,064.79	2,390,680.00	44	2,979,384.79
Louisiana.....	3,742,524.57	3,633,023.00	29	109,501.57
Maine.....	2,645,963.57	1,485,277.00	42	1,160,686.57
Maryland.....	2,390,749.07	1,869,386.00	64	521,363.07
Massachusetts.....	4,052,565.09	1,842,322.00	54	2,210,243.09
Michigan.....	7,961,295.55	4,309,638.00	49	3,651,657.55
Minnesota.....	7,815,383.02	6,752,180.00	58	1,063,203.02
Mississippi.....	4,951,542.29	1,811,730.00	31	3,139,812.29
Missouri.....	9,322,075.71	3,003,597.00	24	6,318,478.71
Montana.....	5,498,827.31	3,057,461.00	50	2,441,366.31
Nebraska.....	5,866,761.66	3,255,126.00	88	2,611,635.66
Nevada.....	3,527,276.18	1,225,469.00	59	2,301,807.18
New Hampshire.....	1,143,088.99	909,827.00	73	233,261.99
New Jersey.....	3,265,299.02	1,447,027.00	68	1,818,272.02
New Mexico.....	4,389,794.61	1,875,151.00	42	2,514,643.61
New York.....	13,688,801.67	887,186.00	18	12,801,615.67
North Carolina.....	6,270,690.68	4,846,796.00	33	1,423,894.68
North Dakota.....	4,222,487.70	1,634,932.00	49	2,587,555.70
Ohio.....	10,202,947.71	5,059,982.00	38	5,142,965.71
Oklahoma.....	6,338,245.60	2,382,781.00	28	3,955,464.60
Oregon.....	4,332,178.26	3,920,461.00	49	411,717.26
Pennsylvania.....	12,632,644.29	10,802,353.00	47	1,830,291.29
Rhode Island.....	641,166.13	450,081.00	39	191,085.13
South Carolina.....	3,946,617.50	1,672,697.00	41	2,273,920.50
South Dakota.....	4,452,883.04	2,271,154.00	46	2,181,729.04
Tennessee.....	6,228,137.98	3,707,632.00	14	2,520,505.98
Texas.....	16,100,404.77	8,301,815.00	33	7,798,589.77
Utah.....	3,117,206.38	1,992,345.00	25	1,124,861.38
Vermont.....	1,242,103.73	498,922.00	17	743,181.73
Virginia.....	5,451,730.28	2,676,337.00	46	2,775,393.28
Washington.....	3,971,675.83	3,863,418.00	86	108,257.83
West Virginia.....	2,922,504.45	2,905,935.00	44	16,569.45
Wisconsin.....	7,004,280.67	2,909,681.00	57	4,094,599.67
Wyoming.....	3,378,558.17	2,570,309.00	53	808,249.17
Total.....	266,750,000.00	149,690,630.00	45	117,059,370.00

This report shows an unexpended balance of approximately \$117,000,000 still available for the use of the States. But during the hearings conducted by the committee and attended by representatives of the Federal Bureau of Public Roads and a majority of the State highway commissions the fact was developed that projects now under survey in the respective States will consume, by the expiration of the present fiscal year, the entire amount of Federal funds appropriated, and that unless immediate relief is given by Congress the entire road-building program as it involves new projects must be abandoned during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1921.

The progress of this work has not been in all cases satisfactory, nor what the advocates of the plan expected. But it must be remembered that conditions during the preceding four years have been abnormal, and that the high cost of labor, scarcity of materials for construction, and inadequate transportation facilities have created

obstacles most difficult to overcome. The further fact that many States had no adequate organizations or authority to take advantage of the plan providing Federal aid, and were forced to await action by their legislative assemblies, has seriously retarded the work in many sections of the country.

The above conditions are being rapidly corrected. Road-building materials can be purchased at a much lower cost than heretofore, and the railroads can provide adequate means for their transportation. The labor situation is no longer acute except as it involves employment for probably 2,000,000 idle men through the slackening of industry during the past six months. The prompt and favorable consideration of this measure will provide work for thousands of men now unemployed, and this fact has, in the judgment of your committee, constituted one of the strongest and most urgent reasons for the favorable recommendation of this bill.

